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Volume 1 No. 11 MONTANA FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT November, 1966

Director's Column

We don't like the idea of raising license fees, but can you imagine a business that sells its products at the price it was selling them in 1947—a builder who builds for the same costs—or a worker who receives wages based on a 1947 pay scale? The breadwinner and the housewife don't have to be reminded that the cost of living has gone up head over heels, nor does the contractor need reminding that the cost of building equipment has skyrocketed and the price of land spiraled over the past several years. Costs have gone up for the Fish and Game Department too.

I use the date of 1947 as a comparison because it was at that time when Montana saw its last raise in general hunting and fishing license fees. The sale of hunting and fishing licenses is the major source of income for operation of the department. I don't mean to infer that the department's income is no greater than it was in 1947.

A change in the makeup of licensing went into effect in 1963, and the department lost money under the new setup. Further, the large antelope herds of eastern Montana, which previously expanded way out of proportion, were brought partially under control through hunting. The severe winter of 1964-65 knocked the numbers of animals down in some eastern areas. The final result was that fewer surplus antelope licenses were available for sale to nonresidents after license drawings. The reduction of nonresident antelope and deer licenses, and possibly the guides law, cut nonresident income to the department by some $100,000.00.

While the cost of administration, living, research, and management programs continues to rise, fish and game licenses took in less money in 1965. Competition for water and land use with other state and federal, as well as private interests, has compounded the problem and the cost of fish and game management and outdoor recreation in general. These problems will be even greater as competition for water and land use gets k e e n e r. Inflated land prices have made the acquistion of sorely needed access sites extremely expensive. Hunters and fishermen will find it progressively more difficult to hunt on private land. While every effort will be made to maintain understanding and a workable relationship between landowners and sportsmen, the posting of private lands is a pattern long established in the more populous states and its existence must be recognized and prepared for. Even though we are fortunate in having considerable public lands in Montana where we may fish and hunt without fear of trespassing, many of these lands are bottled up, so to speak, by surrounding, private acres. It appears that others will wind up the same way. The problem of getting access to such areas is no easy or inexpensive task. In addition to access, game r a n g e s, waterfowl areas, and other types of land are needed for public hunting and fishing purposes.

Added responsibilities pressed on the department, both by law and by public demand, have become costly. A couple of examples are the requirements of hunter safety training for Montana youth and additional enforcement responsibilities accompanying passage of boating safety regulations and anti-litter laws.

In a nutshell, the Fish and Game Department cannot continue to operate at its present level on its present income—let alone meet the growing needs and responsibilities which appear on the horizon. A contingency reserve which was once near one million dollars has shrunk to a sum which would not presently meet the de-

partment's obligations for a full month. This reserve has staved off an increase in licenses for several years.

Most Montanans realize the bargain they have been getting in hunting and fishing. Traditionally, license buyers have been the major supporters of wildlife programs. This has afforded the perpetuation of fish and game management in state hands.

Other states have felt the pinch and their departments, too, have found it necessary to raise their license fees in order to survive. For example, in Montana the resident has been able to fish all year and to hunt game birds, elk, antelope, two deer, and either black or grizzly bear for $9.00—a little less than what the average smoker burns up in a month. There is no exact license structure or exact game makeup in other states, but comparable hunting and fishing licenses would cost the following: Arizona, $36.00; California, $45.00; Colorado, $42.00; Idaho, $17.00; Nevada, $33.50; Oregon, $20.00; Utah $39.50; and Wyoming, $25.00. These figures are based on 1965 license costs and other states have since been granted, or are asking for, license increases.

Just what is the worth of an elk, a deer, or a grizzly bear? Certainly the license fee for most persons is by far the least cost of a hunting or fishing trip. The privilege of trying for a magnificent elk or muley appears to me as worthy of more than the price of a movie ticket. If the worth of a monarch grizzly were to be judged by the value of hunting privileges now placed on him, then he has little more stature than a jackrabbit or a coyote.

Compared to other types of recreation, hunting and fishing licenses are real bargains. Compare, for instance, the cost of an annual fishing license or an elk tag to the following average fees for some other forms of recreation in several western states:

Spectator Type	Duration	Fee
Motion Picture	2 to 3 hours	$1.00 to 2.50
Football Game	2½ hours	2.50 to 5.50
Basketball Game	2 hours	1.50 to 3.00
Baseball Game	2½ hours	1.50 to 2.00
Ice Hockey Game	2 hours	1.50 to 3.50
Indoor Track Meet	3 hours	2.00 to 4.00
Participation Type		
Golf (18 holes)	4 hours	3.00 to 5.00
Boat Rental (14' w/o motor)	8 hours	4.00
Bowling (3 lines)	1 hour	1.50
Skiing		
Rope Tow	Day	2.50
Chair Lift	Day	5.00
Fishing		
(Private fish ponds)	Day	1.00
Overnight Camping	Day	
(State Parks)		1.00 to 1.50
Hunting (Shooting Preserve)	Day	5.00 per bird av.

Because the department does need additional income to operate at its present level, the Fish and Game Commission has tentatively approved the following schedule. I hope that Montanans will consider the proposals with an open mind, in the light of the points which have been mentioned here, and in the value and status of each individual hunting and fishing opportunity.

It is estimated that the proposed fees would amount to an addition of about $800,000.00 to the present fish and game annual income. The monies from fish and game license fees are used only for hunting and fishing oriented programs and are not diverted into other recreational programs which are costly and for which the department is responsible.

	Present Fee	Proposed Fee
Resident Season Fishing	$ 3.00	$ 5.00
Nonresident Limited Fishing (6 day)	$ 3.00	$ 5.00
Nonresident Fishing (Season)	$ 10.00	$ 15.00
Fishing & Upland Game Birds (Resident)	$ 5.00	$ 7.00
Nonresident Game Bird (Season)	$ 25.00	$ 25.00
Nonresident Upland Game Bird (Limited 6-day)		$ 10.00
Resident Game Bird & Black Bear Hunting (prequisite)	$ 2.00	$ 3.00
Elk Tag	$ 1.00	$ 5.00
Deer "A"	$ 1.00	$ 3.00
Deer "B"	$ 1.00	$ 2.00
Black Bear	0	0
Nonresident Big Game	$100.00	$150.00
Turkey	$ 2.00	$ 2.00
Bow and Arrow	$ 2.00	$ 2.00
Mountain Goat	$ 5.00	$ 15.00
Sheep	$ 15.00	$ 25.00
Moose	$ 25.00	$ 25.00
Antelope	$ 1.00	$ 5.00
Bison	$ 25.00	$ 25.00
Grizzly Bear		$ 10.00
Nonresident Black Bear (Spring)	$ 20.00	$ 35.00
All Duplicates	$ 1.00	$ 1.00
Nonresident Deer	$ 20.00	$ 35.00
Nonresident Antelope	$ 20.00	$ 35.00

GEORGE OSTROM WRITES

Mr. George Ostrom of Kalispell writes in the "Hungry Horse News" of some recent observations. There is a very real message in these observations which were written as follows:

Got some verification the other day on something I've suspected for a long time.

Hunters are much worse litterbugs in the back country than the sightseeing "dudes." Hundreds of people visit the Bob Marshall Wilderness each summer to fish and to just get away from the stress of civilization.

Some of these people are bad enough litterers but generally

they are more inclined to be cognizant of what the "Wilderness Philosophy" is all about, thus they usually try to leave things as they find them so that those who follow may also enjoy this land which is set aside and protected from the eroding, corrupting and pillaging of "civilized" man's quest for the almighty dollar.

Comes the fall and the sightseers return to their polluted air and chlorinated water, and the Bob Marshall is quickly converted to big game country. The heavy laden pack strings jangle up the South and Middle Fords of the Flathead and they snake their way up over the passes, Holland, Danaher and Gordon. With the grate of steel hoofs on rock they come down Shaw Creek, Youngs Creek, Tango, and Helen; and everywhere they pass remains garbage they heave and spew with callous negligence in God's backyard.

As a stock maker for the world's finest riflemen Monty Kennedy has few peers, and as a sportsman he has no betters. This I know from personal experience. If Monty is concerned about hunters (not sportsmen) despoiling the wilderness, then I too am concerned.

Since hunting season opened in the Bob Marshall, the litter in Monty's satiristic vernacular "has blossomed." On a recent 29 mile ride from Holland Lake to Big Prairie by way of Gordon Pass and Shaw Creek he counted 124 pieces of litter visible from the trail, cigarette packs, candy wrappers, lunch sacks, beer cans, kleenex, snoose boxes, match book sets. That is 124 sores on the face of the land. Sores detracting from the beauty of this one last place where beauty is supposed to be inviolate.

For those so called sportsmen who do not share Monty's and my concern, let me pose one question, "Have you ever really thought about tomorrow?"

SEDIMENT MAJOR THREAT

According to Dr. Cecil H. Wadleigh, of the Agricultural Research Service, soil erosion is the largest single source of pollutants impairing the quality of surface water. The nation's rivers carry about one billion tons of sediment to the oceans each year.

CALIBER—THE BEST FOR BIG GAME

By Bob Carroll

There's no such animal as the "best" caliber for big game! There may be a best one for you, on a strictly individual basis, though.

Bringing an animal down in its tracks, or close to them hinges on just a few things: tissue destruction, vital organ destruction, loss of blood, disruption of vital nerve centers and disruption of locomotion.

It might be possible to design a cartridge which would be all things to all people, and fire it in a pertect gun. A lot of stories have been sold to editors by fellows who are convinced they've found this miraculous combination. Their pet might be the best for them, but in practice it is impossible to find a smokepole that will do everything the best. We have different degrees of tolerance to recoil, shooting skill, methods of hunting, and types of terrain we like to hunt in.

The man who prefers heavy cover, close stalking and sure shots might use a rifle that would be entirely out of place for another person who works open country and usually takes long shots at running game. It might be best to start at the other end as the whole ball of wax is contained in how the bullet behaves after you land it someplace on a critter.

Bullet designers have burned incense, kicked the cat! and lain awake agonizing over jacket and core designs that will withstand the tremendous impact at near muzzle velocity, from a Super Whiz Bang .30 Magnum on one hand, and still expand if someone raised the rear sight and connected with an animal across a canyon 500 yards away. Similar problems confront designers in getting proper expansion from bullets at the relatively modest velocities of .30-30 class cartridges.

Consequently, there are as many controlled expansion bullets on the market as there are rabbits in a magician's hat, and two or three of them work as advertised. The shooting fraternity more or less accepts the idea that if a bullet expands to about half again its original diameter and retains at least 60% of its original weight, then its likely to get the job done.

There are limits to what you can expect from any bullet. Slugs on the lightest end of what's available in any caliber are designed to expand explosively on varmints. When used on deer or larger game, they are excessively destructive and often create a surface wound that doesn't kill. The heaviest slugs available are nearly as poor a choice for deer and elk hunting. They are meant for maximum penetration and expansion against very massive resistance. If you are going after African lion, water buffalo, Kodiaks or moose, then by all means use the longest heaviest bullets you can get.

We all like to while away the off season hours pouring over velocity, energy and drop tables, endlessly comparing one cartridge with another. Sometimes we may wonder why, for instance, one cartridge has a reputation for instant kills and another, which may show more energy, does not. The story the tables cannot tell is bullet behavior. An example observed by this writer was a mule deer that intercepted a 270 grain slug moving about 2800 feet per second about 90 feet from the muzzle of an improved .375 magnum. The deer was knocked flat but got up running. An entire day of tracking failed to reveal any evidence that the deer was in any way inconvenienced by the hit, nor had lost more than exactly two drops of blood. In this case nearly 2½ tons of striking energy was expended not on the game, but on the tree behind it.

Several other deer have been observed to succumb instantly to precisely the same hit from cartridges of the .30-30 to .30-06 class, which includes a list as long as the tax man's arm. A case of the bullet penetrating and expending its energy over several inches of deer, both lengthwise and diameter-wise from the original point of impact put those deer in the locker.

We would certainly not use a .22 long rifle for deer, yet if we were to go after a bull elephant with a .600 magnum we'd probably feel pretty confident that this miniature cannon without wheels would blast any tusker clear into next week. Yet comparing bullet energy to the size of animal, the

.22 LR is proportionately much more powerful. This makes it easy to see why serious hunters give all the consideration possible to two things: choice of the proper bullet, and exact placement of the shot, and why they forego shots when their quarry is at impossible ranges or angles, or the bullet resting in the spout isn't reasonably adequate for the job at hand.

Some other interesting comparisons show that the energy of a .222 compared to deer, a .30-06 compared to elk and a .300 Weatherby compared to moose all have proportionately the same amount of energy to the body weight of the game.

A .44 magnum's 240 grain slug is showing the same energy as it travels from the muzzle to fifty yards as does a 180 grain silvertip from a .308 WCF as it travels from 300 to 350 yards.

The first shot is, of course, the most important. The animal receives nearly all the shock its nervous system can absorb, and subsequent shots merely whittle away tissue until a hit on the spine or brain kills it, or a hit on a locomotion center stops it. Thus, if the first shot is poorly placed, any others are not going to be nearly as effective. This fact is well known to experienced hunters as well as combat soldiers. Animals can go astonishing distances and do amazing things after being hit several times, any one of which might be expected to be fatal, but which had been preceded by a poorly placed wound.

All of this palaver merely brings out that a properly constructed bullet landing in the right place should be the aim of every hunter, keeping in mind not to stretch the barrel of his gun too far beyond its capabilities.

Several prominent gun writers have built reputations over the years advocating certain things, and in the circumstances each talks about, they are right! Elmer Keith likes a big heavy slug, travelling as fast as he can get it to move. Not many of us ordinary shooters can handle recoil the way Elmer does nor do we have his shooting skill or confidence. Parker Ackley, the famous gunsmith, also does a lot of hunting and often uses a high speed very small caliber which might range between .17 and .24 caliber. Again, Ackley is an excellent shot usually getting one shot kills using the best bullets he can get or make. He just doesn't feel the need of absorbing a lot of recoil. Jack O'Connor, Mr. .270, has used just about everything and still has a particular fondness for his favorite .270's, feeling they combine power with fairly mild recoil to adequately handle anything but the largest bear. Les Bowman, Wyoming guide, outfitter and gunbug, has autopsied hundreds of deer and elk, not to mention bear, and says flatly he would rather see a client shooting a rifle he can hit with using a good bullet design, regardless of the caliber, than make any statements about what is specifically the best cartridge for any game or selection of game.

So the problem of the hunter is not basically whether he uses a .236 Loundenboomer, a 7 mm Whatsis Magnum or a .450 Thunder & Lightening, but rather whether he is using a familiar rifle he can hit with, using a bullet that will neither fly to pieces nor fail to expand entirely, and uses some judgement about what he shoots at and how far away it is.

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November, 1966